UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
FACULTY SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

Minutes
Friday, 14 June 2024
8:30 am
via Zoom (https://umass-amherst.zoom.us/j/96505015750?from=addon)

Present Anthony Paik, Jon Olsen, Eric Berlin, Alison Messier, Ruth-Ellen Verock, Michelle Trim, Neal Katz, David Hoagland

1. Minutes

   Ruth-Ellen Verock-is responsible for the minutes of this meeting. If she is unable to attend, Eric Berlin is responsible.

   The 3 May 2024 meeting minutes were approved. Eric Berlin and Anthony Paik took the minutes for this meeting.

2. Guest: Vice Chancellor Chris Misra on IT support for meetings of the General Faculty

   The Rules Committee met with VC Misra to discuss software to support voting related to faculty referendums as well as for Senate meetings. Other universities have developed their own platforms for conducting secure voting, whereas other campuses employ software from commercial vendors. The Rules Committee discussed taking advantage of two-factor authentication as well as the need for developing bylaws and policy related to faculty referendums. This topic will be discussed at the RC meeting in July.

   Guest: Vice Chancellor Chris Misra on IT support for meetings of the General Faculty
   VC Misra presented several examples of peers which offer online voting for senate. Many have eliminated “present” requirement for votes. Hybrid voting is an added complication. Concerns about who tabulates. Authentication is needed to assure singular vote undermines anonymity. Going forward, mitigation of anxiety by advance notice of procedures and need for any tech. Perhaps developing bylaws for refenda which maximize inclusivity with a longer voting window. Rules committee also discussed issue of quora for general faculty meetings and possible redefinition of general faculty meeting time windows. For instance – these can't happen in the last week of semester. Misra recommended using webinar license which gives presiding officer ability to maintain order. Rules committee will continue discussion.

3. Summer approvals
   a. Courses

i. POLISH 297 Introduction to Polish Language and Culture (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/1099)
ii. CE-ENGIN 422 Introduction to Signalized Intersections (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11204)
iii. CE-ENGIN 380 Experimental Methods in Environmental Engineering (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21589)
iv. JOURNAL 480 Arts & Culture Journalism (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11568)
v. NRC 545 Marine Ecology (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11515)
vi. PHYSICS 533 Data Analysis (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21612)
vii. LINGUIST 506 Introduction to Tone and Intonation (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11413)
viii. SCH-MGMT 695 Workforce Planning, Recruiting, and Selection (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11084)
ix. COMM 615 Survey of Performance Studies (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11584)
x. COMM 616 Introduction to Film Theory (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11581)
xi. COMM 801 Proseminar: Graduate Introduction to Communication (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11585)
xii. COMM 802 Proseminar: Graduate Introduction to Communication (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11586)
xiii. SPP 628 Navigating Washington (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21692)
xiv. POLISCI 794 Law, Politics, and Society (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21659)
xv. PHYSICS 858 Monte Carlo Methods (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21600)
xvi. UNIVRSTY 695 P Positivity and Relaxation Training (PART) (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11449)

b. Programs
i. Revise Accelerated Master's of Higher Education (4+1) (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/10895)
ii. Revise a Degree Program: Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Industrial Engineering(BS) (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/21694)

iii. Revise a Degree Program: Public Health Public Health Sciences(BS) (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11074)

c. Centers / Institutes
   i. Center for Justice, Law, and Societies in Political Science (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/10741)
   ii. Center of Racial Justice and Youth Engaged Research in College of Education (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11171)
   iii. Elaine Marieb Center for Nursing and Engineering Innovation in Nursing (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/11158)
   iv. Energy Transition Institute in Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (https://cps.provost.umass.edu/umacps/proposal/show/10968)

Using its summer approval authority, the Rules Committee approved the courses, programs, and centers/institutes. Committee members discussed adding resource needs, such as physical space (lab spaces, TBL) and library resources, to course proposal forms. This matter will be referred to the AMC and Graduate Council.

4. Discussion items

a. Nominations for upcoming Senate elections

The Rules Committee discussed upcoming elections for an at-large seat on the Rules Committee and Chair of the Rules Committee.

b. Provost's request to fast-track the closure of three centers

The Rules Committee agreed to send these proposals to the Research Council in order to obtain the latter's recommendations.

Rules committee voted to approve fast track processes as it is normal business for inactive centers and in every case, center directors agree.

c. Requests related to the General Faculty meeting

The Secretary discussed a request from a faculty member regarding conducting an audit of the election results. The Senate Office will conduct this audit during the summer.

i. Discussion of how things work going forward with the result of the vote. Rules committee will hold administration accountable for shared governance – return to normal functioning. With new chief of staff, opportunity to re-establish norms.

Discussion of last senate meeting returning to second Thursday of month, especially for last senate meeting. Councils and committees need to have their final meetings before final Senate meeting.

d. Working group or taskforce related to campus activism

The Secretary discussed the status of an administrative taskforce on campus demonstrations. The Rules Committee discussed the possible appointment of faculty members to this taskforce.

i. Rules committee approves the formation, but expressed concerns about the short time window. Suggest end date moved back. Managing expectations – perhaps come up with plan for how to do review instead of thinking it can all get done.
ii. Rules committee approves the Secretary serving on committee
iii. Rules committee considering names for the three members of the committee. Perhaps former rules chairs?
iv. Talking about balancing the presence on committee of people who were in the room when decision was made. Perhaps taking admins off committee as well as making sure people who were demonstrating not on the committee. The Secretary will raise the issue.
v. Discussion of empowering student leadership with mentoring by rules
vi. The Secretary will reach out to people and we will email vote.

Associate Dean reappointments (Provost's request related to Associate Deans) - Rules voted to approve grandfathering in those whose terms are ending now are in the pipeline for 3 years appointments. Going forward, review as in new guidelines. Rules will look at the policy to discuss next meeting

The remaining agenda items were deferred to the next meeting.